

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 JUSE-00 SS-15 L-03 EB-08 SP-02
PM-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00
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-----044137 100046Z /14
O 100016Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6596

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 01209

DEPT PASS JUSTICE FOR ROSENTHAL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EGEN, ECON, CA
SUBJECT: U.S./CANADA URANIUM NEGOTIATIONS

REF: OTTAWA 9920

1. J. STANFORD (EXTAFF) CALLED DCM AFTERNOON MARCH 9 TO
INFORM EMBASSY THAT EXTAFF SECRETARY JAMIESON WOULD CALL
SECRETARY VANCE AND SOLICITOR GENERAL BASFORD WOULD
SUBSEQUENTLY CALL ATTORNEY GENERAL BELL TO EXPLAIN POLITI-
CAL CONSTRAINTS ON GOC'S ABILITY TO RELEASE TO USG
INFORMATION ON URANIUM CARTEL. STANFORD SAID JAMIESON
AND BASFORD WOULD MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

--GOC WORKING HARD TO DEVELOP ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS SUB-
MITTED BY U.S. AT DEC 5 TALKS IN OTTAWA. GOC HAS ALSO
STUDIED PROBLEM OF HOW TO DEAL WITH EXISTING REGULATIONS
WHICH PROHIBIT TRANSFER ABROAD OF INFORMATION ON URANIUM
CARTEL.

--NOV 9 DECISION OF ONTARIO SUPREME COURT (REFTEL) STRUCK
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DOWN SECTION OF REGULATIONS GIVING MINISTER OF EM&R
DISCRETION TO GRANT EXCEPTIONS TO REGULATIONS. THUS,
AMENDMENT TO ORDER IN COUNCIL WOULD BE NECESSARY TO PERMIT
RELEASE OF INFORMATION TO U.S.

--AMENDMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY AND
WOULD THUS THROW MATTER INTO PUBLIC ARENA, MAKING IT A

POLITICAL ISSUE IN DELICATE PERIOD PRIOR TO NATIONAL ELECTION. GOC HAS DECIDED IT CANNOT AFFORD TO TAKE THIS RISK.

--GOC PREPARED TO MEET AGAIN SHORTLY (IN NEXT 10 DAYS) BUT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO BE AS RESPONSIVE AS IT WOULD LIKE TO BE BECAUSE OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS.

2. STANFORD EMPHASIZED THAT GOC DESIRES TO GO FURTHER ON INFORMATION RELEASE THAN POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS WOULD ALLOW AND WANTS TO MAINTAIN "GOOD FAITH" IN URANIUM NEGOTIATIONS. CONSEQUENTLY EXPLANATION OF GOC POSITION IS TAKING PLACE AT HIGH POLITICAL LEVEL.

3. STANFORD INDICATED THAT CANADIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON (L. SMITH, ECONOMIC COUNSELOR) HAS PASSED SUBSTANCE OF THIS MESSAGE TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY KATZ.

4. COMMENT: WE WONDER WHETHER THE GOC HAS FULLY WEIGHED THE POLITICAL RISK OF RELEASING INFORMATION AGAINST THE RISK THAT THE GRAND JURY WOULD DECIDE AGAINST CANADIAN INTERESTS ON BASIS OF INCOMPLETE INFORMATION. WE RECOMMEND THAT THIS QUESTION BE PUT TO THE GOC. ENDERS

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